A FATHER'S LAMENT FOR HIS YOUNG DAUGHTER.

BY PARK BENJAMIN.

Thou art torn from me, my blossom, thy fragrance is no
And I thy early blighting with bitter tears deplore; [more,
In vain I look on other flowers—no rose so fair I see—
For Ada was the sweetest bud in all the world to me!

Oh, thou wast nurtured tenderly and watered with the dew
Of all Life's best affections unchangeable and true,
But Summer breezes wafted thee where Summer daisies lie—
Alas, my beautiful! that thou should'st fade away and die.

My child! my child! my darling child! I sit and weep alone,
To think that thou, my gentle dove, so far away hast flown—
So far away; for that bright Heaven, to which thy soul was borne,
Is very far from this dim Earth, where I am left to mourn.

Oh, when the music of thy voice fell on my listening ear,
Unconscious as a robin's chirp, and ah! more soft and clear—
I dreamed when years had passed away I still should hear thy words,
More welcome than the harmonies of all the singing birds.

But thou art gone, and those bright eyes are darkened from the sun,
There is no freshness in the cheeks I loved to look upon,
The red has vanished from the lips, so often pressed to mine,
And nothing but the clay-cold form remains of what was thine.

Pure innocent! thy home is with the holy and the blest,
Thy Savior's bosom now, my dove, thy happy ark of rest—
And though with Summer birds and flowers my little Ada fled,
The glory of the Cherubim is shining round her head!

LABOR AND THE LABORERS.

[Under the above head we propose to publish, as rapidly as convenient, a series of articles succinctly portraying the state of Labor and the condition of the Laborers in the different parts of the United States. Statistical and other information upon the subject is solicited, and when used will be paid for by *The Tribune.*]

I.

THE SHOE TRADE AND SHOEMAKERS OF NEW-YORK.

The number of those who visit this City during the course of a year, whether of American citizens attracted by business or pleasure, or of foreign immigrants in pursuit of the advantages, social and industrial, denied them elsewhere, has been estimated to exceed that of any other city in the world. Without adopting the responsibility of this assertion, it is indisputable that among this floating population one feeling is prevalent, and that is of surprise at the magnitude of our business operations, as exhibited in the crowded waarves, the impassible sidewalks, the busy streets, the well-filled stores, and other multitudinous evidences of a prosperous community. New-York is at once the wonder of foreigners and the pride of its own inhabitants and Americans generally—the former being struck by the unexampled rapidity with which it has forced its way into the very foremost rank of the commercial cities of the world, and the latter seeing in it in addition a miniature of the rapid development and growing wealth of the entire Union. New-York may justly be called the Metropolis of the United States according to the popular acceptation of the word, standing, as it does, first on this continent in point of wealth and population, and attracting to it, like the capitals of the old countries, all the extremes of our social system, both for good and evil. To the aspiring and ambitious it appears to offer a theater wherein may be developed some favorite scheme whose success will make the projector rich or famous; and hardened outcasts resort hither as a secure hiding-place from the vengeance of outraged laws. Indeed, although it would be easy to mention several cities with a larger population than this, both in Europe and Asia, there is scarcely one, with the exception of London—still the great metropolis of the world—which does so extensive a *general* business as this vast City of ours, though Manchester and Glasgow deal on a more extensive scale in the single article of cotton, Lyons in silk, Birmingham in cutlery, and so forth.

Yet few of those crowds who daily gaze on and admire the endless line of vehicles loaded with all kinds of merchandise, and the thronged streets and well-frequented shops, extend their observation beyond the feeling of astonishment to which a sight, to many so novel, naturally gives rise; but, were they to reflect on the details of this immense wealth, and endeavor to form an estimate o the capital employed and the energies exercised to produce the spectacle they were witnessing, they would then for the first time discover the real theme for wonder. It is true such a study seems at first sight dull and unpromising; yet it is so in appearance only, for each fresh inquiry leads to the discovery of some interesting fact before unsuspected, and to a true knowledge of the condition of our domestic industry—what are its resources—how affected by foreign competition—the condition of the artizans engaged in the particular branch under investigation, and other equally important points.

It would probably appear difficult to select a more common-place topic than that of the Boot and Shoe trade, yet the inquiries we have been led to make on the subject convince us that, on the contrary, it is one full of interest, and of really national importance as regards the amount of capital engaged, the number of hands to whom it gives employment, and its immense annual products, which are supposed to exceed those of any other single branch of manufacture. We annex a few results of our observations.

The Boot and Shoe trade may be classed under two great divisions—the wholesale and the retail: these are again subdivided into customers' and factory work, of which the latter is by far the most extensive, and we will, therefore, speak of it first. The great seat of this branch is in the Eastern States, principally Massachusetts, Maine and Connecticut, though there are several manufactories in New-Jersey, Pennsylvania and Ohio. As Massachusetts is estimated to have a greater capital invested in this trade, employing more hands and producing more goods than the rest of the Union together, some particulars respecting it will be found interesting. The latest official papers on the subject were collected as far back as 1845, though we believe a new estimate of the commerce and industry of Massachusetts will shortly be made. By these returns we find that in that single State, during one year, there were manufactured 3,768,160 pairs of boots and 17,128,152 pairs of shoes, of a total value, at the makers' computation, of $14,799,140, giving constant employment to 45,877 persons—27,199 being males and 18,678 females. In the same State, and during the same period, 13,808 bushels of shoe-pegs, valued at $18,206, and 123,500 lasts, worth $8,145, were thrown into the market. The principal towns engaged in this commerce are Worcester, Lynn, Haverhill and Milford, though there are many others less worthy of mention doing a very extensive business.

To give some idea of the extent of this trade we may mention that one-fifth of the whole population of Essex County are engaged in it!

But immense as these figures prove the trade to be, they very inadequately represented its real value and importance, as the returns, though collected at the expense of the State for public purposes, were entirely voluntary, in consequence of which many refused to render any information, while others notoriously undervalued the extent of their business from what they improperly considered "prudential motives." But if by no means a faithful index at the time of publication, it is totally inapplicable to the present state of the trade, as persons who have for years been extensively engaged in the wholesale branch in New-York, and whose position enables them to form an accurate judgment, are of opinion that the production in Massachusetts of boots and shoes has at least doubled in the last nine years. We may thus get an approximation to the real value at the present day by adding say twenty-five per cent. to the official returns for undervaluation, which would give $18,498,925 as the value of that manufacture in 1845; and doubling it to allow for the estimated increase, we should have the enormous sum of $36,997,850, which, great as it is, is believed to be within rather than to exceed the value, and one-third of the whole of this finds its way to New-York, either for reexportation or home use.

Presuming the imperfections in the returns to be evenly proportioned throughout every branch of trade, we find developed the startling fact that every other manufacture is inferior in value to that of boots and shoes: the next most important item consisting of cotton goods of all kinds, which are valued at $12,193,449, leaving a balance in favor of the former of $2,605,691.

We give especial prominence to the Massachusetts returns, both because they are the only official documents to which we have had access, and on account of the unrivalled magnitude of the scale in which this branch of manufactures is there conducted, it amounting, as before stated to half that of the entire Union. It is supposed that the value of these goods forwarded annually to New-York, at least $12,000,000, the remainder being sent not only all over the United States, but exported in great quantities to the West Indies, South America Australia, the Sandwich Islands, and some even to England. By far the greater part consist of what are termed pegged boots, though many are of superior workmanship, fetching as high a price as any in the market. These, however, are an exception, the remarkable cheapness of the majority being the great cause of their universal demand as they are in many cases sold for less than would remunerate a working shoemaker only to make them, exclusive of the price of the materials employed.

There are in New-York 250 Boot and Shoe Warehouses and stores dealing in goods not of their own manufacture, of which about fifty import almost exclusively from the Eastern States, and re-sell at a trifling profit to the remainder, acting, indeed, as a kind of shoe-brokers. Some conception of the extent of the business operations of these great wholesale houses may be formed when it is known that the annual sales of three of the largest, average not under $1,000,000 each. Several reach $700,000, and some others vary from $100,000 to $500,000. Many of the goods are re-shipped hence to other ports, domestic and foreign, but one of the leading houses sometimes executes orders, in City business alone, in one day, to the amount of $5,000. Some of the stores above alluded to, deal largely in a superior and more expensive article, manufactured in large quantities in New-York City, and to these we shall have occasion to allude hereafter.

There are, besides, several hundred boot-makers whose business depends mainly on goods made to order, though some few sell also the better class of the manufactured article.

Nor must we omit to mention those very useful members of the art—the menders of boots and shoes, whose numerical force must be very considerable, as they are to be found in almost every street in the least fashionable quarters of the city. Unlike the ancient hero of the nursery rhyme, they do not "live in a stall" in New-York (though they are still frequently to be found in that limited habitation in the European cities), but generally carry on business in their own rooms, which, in too many cases, prove that the domestic economy of the fraternity of cordwainers has not improved since the original publication (date unknown) of the legend above referred to, as "it serves them for parlor, for kitchen, and 'all." They are, however, for the most part, a very industrious class of men (albeit somewhat addicted to the observance of St. Monday in many instances) and make, on an average, more than the man who works for a "shop," without that compulsory irregularity in the hours of labor which the latter so frequently encounters.

An article on this trade would be imperfect were we to omit to mention the dealers in what are termed Boot and Shoe Findings, and the Tree Last Makers.

The "findings" constitute a trade of so much importance as to be carried on by 38 firms, six of whom are wholesale dealers, and whose aggregate sales exceed $600,000 a year. They traffic in all the articles used in the manufacture of boots and shoes, as well as in the implements wherewith they are made—awls, lapstones, hammers, wax, clout-nails, sparables, pegs, laces, and threads, trees and lasts—though some carry on a trade exclusively in these latter articles. In a word, everything employed by way of materials or tools in any branch of the business. The rapidity with which wooden pegs are made, and the vast numbers used, are almost incredible. By an improvement in machinery introduced within three years, one firm manufactures fifty bushels daily, and with an evenness and smoothness really wonderful, only the very choicest kind of wood being used. Yet the clever invention by which this result is obtained is in its turn threatened with obscurity from one exhibiting still greater ingenuity of construction, as in addition to making, it will actually perform the whole process of pegging a shoe in an incredibly short space of time, in a style fully equal to that of manual labor, over which it possesses one immense advantage—that the time occupied in inserting three rows of pegs is not longer than is required for one. New-Hampshire enjoys almost a monopoly in the fabrication of shoe-pegs. Till within a few years, the United States were nearly entirely dependent on foreign countries for the various articles comprising the findings, but the increase of domestic manufactures has been so rapid, that at the present day only one third of the goods used are of foreign manufacture; and it is the opinion of one of the most extensive dealers in the city, that had the tariff of 1842 remained unmodified, even this proportion would have been much decreased. Under the definition "findings," we do not include leather, for which we are still largely indebted to France as well as to England.

There are in this City but nine manufacturers of boot and shoe lasts, the Eastern States being also the principal producers of these articles, supplying about $200,000 worth annually, and $59,000 worth of shoe-pegs.

We learn, on the authority of the latest published official returns, that in one year there were entered at the Custom-House, in the article of tanned leathers, dressed and undressed, 352,937 lbs., valued at $82,830; of skins, trimmed and dressed and not dressed, 95,614 dozens, worth $1,047,259; and of boots and shoes, 42,291 pairs, estimated at $54,127. To which, might be added a large item for bookbinders' leather, as well as manufactured gloves, which latter alone were entered to the amount of $1,314,706, principally from France, Belgium and England, as well as many other articles not minutely specified, but estimated roughly at $274,678.

We have thus sketched a few outlines, which will enable the reader to judge of the real value and extent of the boot and shoe trade, and other branches of industry immediately connected with it, by which it is apparent that the sum of $100,000,000 would not cover the annual outlay on these articles of dress throughout the United States. Assuming the correctness of the statement that the Bay State produces yearly, in the wholesale branch, as much as all the rest of the States together, and that its value is, in round numbers, $37,000,000, we have for all the manufacturing States $74,000,000, leaving $26,000,000 for all the work made to order throughout the country. Incredible as this amount at first sight appears, so far exceeding that of any other article of our national industry, it is believed to be beneath its actual value, and a reference to the census, which gives say 25,000,000 of inhabitants, strengthens this opinion, as that would allow yearly, subtracting the trade to foreign countries, only about $3 50 per inhabitant, which would certainly be a very moderate estimate for a year's consumption. Our exports to British North America alone, exclusive of the West India Colonies, amounted in twelve months, according to the above-mentioned documents, to $177,000; to New-Grenada, $175,000; Cuba being the next largest consumer of these goods.

The effect of glutting the market with a cheap and showy article has been felt most severely by the artizans engaged in what is technically termed "customers' "work," as an effort has been made to bring the goods made to order nearer the price of the wholesale, which latter are certainly very inferior in durable qualities. Another reason may be found in the greater proportionate number of men in that branch of the trade than in any other, owing principally to the influx of immigrants, which causes the number clamorous for work continually to increase, while the demand for laborers is falling off from the greater cheapness with which the goods from the Eastern States are made. Among the numerous strikes which the City has witnessed this spring, was that of the Boot and Shoemakers, and we believe that up to the period of writing this article no arrangement has yet been made with the employers. Besides urging the necessity of an increase of the rate of wages on account of the higher price of provisions, rents, and so forth, they state that they are worse paid than any other body of skilled mechanics, and we are inclined to think that such is the case. At the present rates, we believe $8 a week would be above the average made by a workman, entirely unaided, employed during ten hours a day, but they claim, as one justification of the present movement, that even by working from fifteen to eighteen hours a day, including the loss of time in going backward and forward, to receive an order and deliver the work when executed, and subtracting the cost of "findings" and light, which are at their own expense, they cannot earn more than $10 a week, while $7 is stated to be above the average made throughout the year by the whole of the trade in the City, numbering, it is supposed, nearly 4,000 workmen, a very large proportion of whom are German.

But, notwithstanding the surplus of workmen in this trade, the rate of pay on "piece-work" is, at the present day, higher than it was ever known to be before, the increase given making a difference of about one dollar a week in a man's earnings over the prices paid ten years ago. Yet, in consequence of the much enhanced price of provisions and rent, and above all, of the excess of labor to meet the demand, causing the work to be divided among so many more hands, it is certain that the condition of the boot and shoemakers in this City has retrograded. In speaking of an actual rise in the scale of prices, we are aware that there are certain establishments, dealing only in inferior articles, where wages far beneath the recognized standard are paid; but our remarks are not intended to include exceptional cases, which these certainly are.

Female labor has for some time been in active demand in one branch of the shoemaking trade, namely, the "binding," and the opening of this new field to the skill of the other sex has certainly been attended with no advantage to any one concerned except the employers, who pay for the services rendered such a pittance as would be very inappropriately described as a remuneration. The binding of children's shoes is paid for at the rate of two pairs for 3 cents, or 18 cents a dozen pair, while for the full size 5 cents a pair, or 4/10 a dozen is given. Now a first rate hand may succeed, by the closest application, say from fourteen to seventeen hours a day, if uninterrupted by domestic cares, in making during the week, four dozen pairs, for which, after delivery and approval, she will be paid $2 40—that being the maximum paid, and representing the value of not less than eighty hours' labor; and from this miserable dole the cost of light and fire is to be deducted! We are not prepared to say this sum is never exceeded, as some houses may pay a slight advance on these prices, but it is more than sufficient for us to know that this is *above* the average that hundreds of women and girls in this City are earning from that source alone. As one instance, a married woman, who was in the habit of adding to the weekly store by "binding" for a New-York house, suddenly found herself, owing to the prolonged illness of her husband, which consumed all their little resources, called upon at once to administer to the wants of her sick partner, and to earn sufficient to prevent both from starving. With true womanly devotion she labored almost incessantly, snatching only enough repose to enable her to drag on from one weary day to another and with all these exertions she found at the end of the week she had earned $1 60! It may be said that much of the time was devoted to attention to the suffering patient, which is undoubtedly true; but the hours she applied to her labor alone would still leave a long day's work. It must be understood that this case is not brought forward as being either solitary or possessing unusual claims on our sympathy—on the contrary, it gives but a faint picture of the hideous poverty that exists among some classes of our working population; and though we are so apt to point complacently to America as being a land where the poor may become rich, and all who have to live by labor may get a fair reward, yet an inquiry into the condition of certain classes in our large cities, would reveal an amount of crime-begetting poverty and destitution which would surprise and alarm us, creating, if not compassion, at least fear of the imminent dangers which attend society with such poverty growing up in the midst of it.

The admittance of women to work in certain branches of industry for which they are naturally better adapted than men, but from which they have been hitherto excluded by the tyranny of custom, is certainly desirable, as tending, under proper conditions, to add to their own independence and dignity, (for that there is a dignity in labor is beginning to be better understood;) but if the introduction of female labor is to be followed by a reduction of the scale of wages to starvation prices, abundant evidence proves that so far from her social position being ameliorated, the reverse must inevitably follow. Human nature is substantially the same all the world over, and if a fair equivalent is denied to honest industry, vicious means will be and are daily resorted to, finally terminating in hopeless and irremediable degradation. Of course, the exceptions are numerous, forming the heroes and heroines of domestic life, not less bright and ennobling to human nature than similar examples in more fortunate spheres; but the "annals of the poor" have never been written, and never will be, for lack of an historian to lay before us the instances of self-devotion, of uncomplaining wretchedness through many a weary year, of adherence to the principles of virtue, and resistance to great and sudden temptations when surrounded by a soul-deadening poverty, which are so frequently to be encountered. And yet such instances have been met with during our inquiry into the uninviting subject of the state of the Boot and Shoe Trade in New-York.

FLORIDA.

Its Discovery, Exploration and Settlement.

The discovery, exploration and settlement of FLORIDA are as pregnant with the romantic, adventurous and tragical as are those of any other portion of the United States; and while the history of the exploration and colonization of the "Old Thirteen" is as familiar as household words, even to the school children of the North, the thrilling incidents and events connected with Florida are quite unknown. The brief mention and chronological presentation of some of the most notable events in the history of the Peninsula State of the South may be amusing, interesting, and possibly instructive.

In 1492 Columbus discovered San Salvador, San Domingo, Cuba and other West India Islands. In 1497 Americus Vespucius discovered the Continent of South America. In 1498 Columbus visited the South American Continent, and in 1498 Sebastian Cabot discovered and coasted along the North American Continent from Labrador to Albemarle Sound. He was in search of a more northern passage to the *East Indies* than Columbus had taken. Thus in less than six years the Continents of North and South America and the West India Islands had been discovered.

In 1520 Cortez and his companions invaded and conquered the Mexican Empire; and in 1533 Pizarro and his associates conquered the Incas of Peru—the Children of the Sun—and possessed themselves of their palaces and temples of gold. Thus in forty-one years from the discovery of the West India Islands by Columbus, North and South America had been visited and partially explored, and Mexico and Peru had been added to the Crown of Spain.

The discovery of Columbus was not the result of accident, but it was the incident of a voyage undertaken to test the truth of geographical theories and speculations. This discovery of Columbus displayed a NEW WORLD for the exploration of active and adventurous spirits, and gold being discovered it became the talismanic incentive to pillage and conquest.

But there is a portion of this New World which was first visited and explored, neither by the promptings or suggestions of science, the love of gold, or of adventure, of liberty, of religion, or any other of the ordinary motives to discovery, exploration, conquest and colonization—and that portion is now partly within the limits of Florida; and the motive or incentive to its first visitation and exploration was to find the "*fountain of youth.*"

JUAN PONCE DE LEON, who in his youth had been a brave and chivalric soldier in the wars against the Moors—who had been a companion of Columbus, and had won and acquired honor, wealth and distinction, was dissatisfied and unhappy—old age had overtaken him, while his ambitious projects were yet unexecuted. He sighed for the restoration of his youth, strength and beauty. Among the natives of the Carribee Islands, he had heard of a wonderful Fountain, which possessed the miraculous property of restoring the bloom and vigor of youth to age and decrepitude. The existence of such a Fountain was confirmed by the Indian traditions, and it was not only believed by Juan Ponce, but very generally credited at the Court of Castile and Aragon.

In March, 1512, Juan Ponce, then Governor of Porto Rico, sailed with three ships in search of this Fountain of Youth, to the unexplored regions of the Northwest; he sailed along the Bahama Islands, inquiring for the rejuvenating waters, and thence northwestwardly, he discovered land on Sunday, March 27th, and landed a little south of where St. Augustine now is. The country was in the first bloom of spring, the trees covered with blossoms and the ground with flowers; and because of this vernal beauty, or that he first discovered land on the Sunday before Easter, which the Spaniard called *Pascua de Flores*, he gave to it the name of FLORIDA. After diligent search for the Fountain, and bathing in all the springs and brooks he found, he proceeded south, touching and exploring the coast, and the islands or keys, to the Tortugas, where he caught 117 turtles in one night, and named the group of islands, Tortugas—i. e. *turtles*. Failing in the object of his voyage, he returned, disappointed, to Porto Rico. Age and its infirmities still increasing upon him, in 1521 he again sailed, in two ships, to the Florida coast, in search of the "Fountain of Youth." He chilled his aged frame by bathing in all the springs and streams, fought a bloody battle with the Indians, and was wounded by an arrow in the thigh. Sick and dejected, he returned as far as Cuba and died. And although Juan Ponce failed in discovering the Fountain and acquiring immortal youth by bathing in its rejuvenating waters, he acquired a world-wide fame by discovering and naming that portion of the American continent, a part whereof is now known as FLORIDA.

The account of the discovery of Ponce de Leon being circulated in Spain, it was natural for the adventurous to imagine the interior of Florida filled with people, rich cities and golden temples, as in the case of Mexico and Peru; and a cavalier, Pamphilo de Narvaez, filled with auriferous imaginings, obtained a commission from the king to conquer and govern the country from Cape Florida to Palmos River (Galveston Bay); and in 1527 he sailed with five ships, was detained in San Domingo nearly a year repairing losses, and in April, 1828, landed near Tampa Bay with 400 men and 80 horses. The object of the expedition was conquest, settlement and gold. The Indians informed Narvaez that in the interior was the Apalachee country, filled with people, cities and gold. He left his ships and the coast, and marched through swamps and hammocks to an Indian settlement of 240 wigwams, near where Tallahassee now is, and this was, the Capital, the *Mexico* of the Apalachees. Narvaez was disappointed and disgusted, and resolved to abandon the country and repair to Cuba: but he had sent away his ships on leaving Tampa Bay. He proceeded to the Bay of Auté, now St. Marks, where he built five small open boats, making nails of his stirrups, bridle-bits, and cross bows—ropes of the tails and manes of horses twisted with the fibres of the palm, and sails he made of the shirts of his men. In these five boats he put out to sea, encountered a storm, and all perished but Alvar Nuñez and four others. These were made prisoners by the Indians, and afterward attempted to find their way across the country to the Spanish settlements of Mexico; and after passing from tribe to tribe, they at last arrived at Compostela, on the Pacific Ocean, in seven years from their landing in Florida. They returned to Spain, and Nuñez published an account of the expedition.

About this time, there appeared at the Spanish Court of Charles V., a cavalier of gentle birth, of noble bearing, and in the prime of manhood. He had been a companion of Pizarro in his Peruvian conquests, and returned to Spain with gold and glory. He appeared at the Royal Court with all the rich and gorgeous surroundings of the most fashionable Spanish nobleman of that day. He married Isabella de Bobadilla, a young lady of distinguished rank and personal attraction, and thus he was, apparently, in the possession of all that was desirable in this world. But HERNANDO DE SOTO was disconsolate and unhappy. Cortez and Pizarro had immortalized themselves by the conquest of empires and golden cities. De Soto was ambitious, and sought to rival, if not surpass, the glory of the Mexican and Peruvian conquerors. He learned from the account of Nuñez of the extensive region called Florida—of its only partial exploration, and the golden stories of the Indians. He applied, at once, to the Emperor Charles V., and was appointed Governor of Florida and Cuba, and organized his expedition. He landed in Cuba, April, 1538, with a brilliant armament; and, perfecting his final arrangements, he left his wife, Doña Isabella, to govern Cuba, and sailed for Florida. On May 25, 1539, he landed his forces at Tampa Bay, consisting of 1,000 Spaniards, mostly young men, armed with cross-bows, swords, lances, fire-arms, and one cannon. He had 350 horses, a large number of cattle and swine, for settlement; and for the conversion of the Indians, he had twelve priests, eight assistants, and four monks. On every Sunday and holyday, he erected an altar and said mass.

Soon after landing he proceeded to the Apalachee country, which was represented to contain large cities, a cultivated country and gold. He had roads to cut, bridges to build, swamps to cross, and savages to fight. At a place now known as Micanopy, he encountered 10,000 Indians, and killed 1,500 warriors. At length he reached the Capital of the Apalachee country, consisting of about 250 huts. Here he found plenty of corn, beans, pumpkins and other vegetables, but no gold or cities—and this was the auriferous region he had come conquer! He remained here five months, sent out exploring parties, discovered the Bay of St. Marks, where Narvaez had built his boats, and so forth.

In March 1540, De Soto broke up his encampment near where Tallahasse now stands, and marched northeasterly in search of the Cosachiqui country, which he was told abounded in gold, silver, and pearls, and was governed by a female *Cacique*, who lived in a large city. He found the country and it was governed by a woman, but the gold was copper, the silver mica, and the large city a few Indian huts. In the lower part of what is now Alabama, he fought a great battle with the Indians, headed by their chief, Tuscaloosa—the Indians set fire to their village, and amid the conflagration and slaughter, 11,000 Indians were said to have been killed and burned. De Soto lost 82 men and 42 horses, and in the upper part of Alabama, in another battle, he lost 40 men and 50 horses.

In the month of May, 1541, two years from his landing in Florida, De Soto crossed the Mississippi River, a little below where Memphis now is, and encamped on the west bank: his devious, zig-zag course, or line of march, from Tampa Bay to the Mississippi, through forests, swamps and hostile Indians, was more than 1,500 miles. While encamped upon the west bank of the Mississippi River, De Soto was requested by the Indian chiefs to pray for rain to his gods, it being a time of drought; and he caused a huge cross to be made of the largest pine-tree, so large that 100 men could not lift it; this cross was raised on the highest elevation overlooking the waters of the Mississippi and St. Francis Rivers; a procession composed of the army and Indians was formed, led by priests and friars chanting the Litany, around the cross, and then all knelt down in front and offered up prayers, and then approaching the cross, solemnly and silently, knelt and kissed it. This impressive spectacle, this planting the cross upon the bank of the Father of Rivers, and worshiping the SAVIOR more than 300 years ago, was witnessed by 15,000 to 20,000 Indians.

De Soto marched west, through what is now Missouri, and then south through what is now Arkansas—spending nearly a year in his explorations west of the Mississippi—but everwhere he found a wilderness inhabited by savages and wild beasts only. At last, dispirited, he returned to the Mississippi and again encamped, with a view of building two vessels to send down the river and to Havana for supplies of provisions and men, and to communicate with his wife. While building these vessels, he sickened and died. His mortal remains were placed in a hollow live oak tree, by his companions, and at the still hour of midnight, sunk in the middle of the Mississippi river, in 19 fathoms water. The Indians were told that he was not dead, but gone up to Heaven. De Soto was the first white man who saw and launched his bark upon the "Father of Waters"—he was in search of cities, gold, and an empire—he was too early by 300 years.

De Soto being dead, his followers determined to march westward, in hopes of reaching the Spanish settlements in Mexico. They left in June, 1542, and marched west four months, and reaching the Pawnee and Camanche Indians, they despaired of finding the Spanish settlements, and returned again to the Mississippi. Their number was now reduced to 311, and these clad in buffalo, deer and bear skins, resembling wild beasts more than human beings. They built vessels, sailed down the river and along the coast, reaching Panuco, near Tampico, in Mexico, in 1543. During all this time Isabella had heard nothing of her husband; she had vessels constantly cruising along the coast and gulf in search of him, and after so long and anxious an interval, the news of his death and of the failure of his magnificent enterprise overwhelmed her with sorrow. She soon died of a broken heart.

Twenty years after De Soto, another unsuccessful attempt to explore and settle Florida, was made by the French Protestants, under a commission to colonize it with Huguenots, with temporary success. The expedition consisted of three ships, and landed near the mouth of the St. John's River, and built a Fort. The ensuing year they received additions from France, and the colony flourished. This was the first European or Christian settlement made in the United States—it originated in a desire for religious freedom, and its destruction resulted from religious bigotry. Fifteen months after its foundation, this colony was suddenly surprised and destroyed by a party of Spaniards, under Pedro Melendez.

The Huguenots were encouraged by the French monarch to colonize Florida, but the King of Spain, Phillip II., claimed the country by discovery, and hated the French Protestants; and he, therefore, contracted with Melendez to invade Florida with 500 men, and to establish a colony of at least 500 persons, with 12 Priests and 4 Jesuits—for which Melendez was to have commercial advantages and was made Governor for life. Melendez sailed for Florida, and landed at St. Augustine Sept. 8, 1565, and after celebrating the mass of the Virgin, the foundations of the town of St. Augustine were laid. This was 288 years ago, and St. Augustine is, therefore, the oldest town, by more than forty years, in the United States. Having said mass, and founded the town, Melendez suddenly marched upon the Huguenot colony on the St. John's, and barbarously massacred men, women and children, and labeled their dead bodies with this inscription—"*not as Frenchmen, but as heretics.*" The French monarch did nothing to revenge this massacre, but two years afterward a French Huguenot, Domini De Gomgues, fitted out three ships with 150 men and sailed for Florida, and for the express purpose of revenging the death of his countrymen. He landed on the St. John's River, captured two small forts which the Spaniards had erected, and, finding his force too small for further operations, he hung up his Spanish captives, and placed upon their dead bodies this inscription—"*not as Spaniards, but as murderers.*" Thus, it was religious bigotry and fanatical hatred that occasioned the establishment of St. Augustine, and the destruction of the first European colony in the United States.

In 1565, the country known in Spanish geography as Florida, was of large extent and quite unknown. The Spaniards claimed all the country from Nova Scotia to Mexico on the Atlantic and Gulf;—the British claimed, by discovery the country along the Atlantic coast; and the French, the country lying on the St. Lawrence and the Upper Lakes.

For 200 years after the foundation of St. Augustine, the region now known as Florida was as little known and as little occupied by Europeans as in the days of De Soto. During this large interval, England was settling the Old Thirteen Colonies, and France was exploring and settling the regions now known as Canada, Illinois, Missouri and Louisana: but Spain was doing nothing, save occupying St. Augustine as a military post, building a wall around it and erecting a fort to defend the Colonists against the Indians and the rovers and pirates of the seas.

In 1585, Sir Francis Drake took possession of St. Augustine, plundered it of 14 pieces of brass cannon and the military chest of £2,000. He was the first buccaneer or *Fillibuster*, and Capt. Davis was the second Fillibuster, who plundered it in 1665.

In 1702, while a war existed between Great Britain and Spain, Governor Moore, of Carolina, again plundered St. Augustine, and broke up the missionary stations in Middle Florida. Pensacola was founded in 1696 by a colony from Mexco.

In 1754, Spain possessed Florida, which then embraced the Peninsula, and extended from Alatahama River in Georgia to the Perdido, west of Pensacola—and this was all she possessed on the Continent north of Mexico. At this time France possessed much the largest portion of this continent, but ten years subsequent she had not a single foot of land upon it.

In 1754 England and France went to war about their American possessions and Spain took a part—this was the Old French War—and by the Treaty of Peace in 1763, France withdrew from this Continent, Florida was ceded by Spain to England, and France ceded to Spain Louisiana west of the Mississippi, including New-Orleans on the east.

Florida was possessed by England from 1763 to 1784—twenty-one years—and was divided into East and West Florida, and at that time included the southern portions of Mississippi and Alabama. During these 21 years, Florida flourished—400 New-England families emigrated to West Florida, which was governed by a military Commandant. West Florida was under military rule till 1784, and East Florida till 1781, when, by the King's command, an upper and lower House of Assembly was called at St. Augustine—the Governor made a speech, exhorting the members to levy a tax upon themselves and constituents for the support of government—the Assembly only imposed a small tax on licences to sell spirituous liquors, insufficient in the aggregate, to pay the salary of the Treasurer. This was the first and last representative Legislative Assembly convened in Florida previous to the purchase thereof by the United States. In 1763, East Florida contained about 4,000 inhabitants—in 1784 there were 13,000.

During the British possession, Lord Rolle attempted a settlement of women on St. John's River—he sent out 300 in a single colony, and located them at a place called *Rollstown*—many died and others dispersed into Georgia and Carolina—the colony did not increase or prosper.

In 1767, Dr. Turnbull, an Englishman, for the sum of £400 paid to the Governor of one of the Greek Islands, obtained permission to carry into Florida a number of Greek families. He loaded a small vessel with them and stopped at the islands of Corsica and Minorca, and loaded other vessels with Corsicans and Minorcans—in all 1,500. He agreed to carry them to Florida free of expense, to feed and clothe them, and at the end of three years to give to each head of a family 50 acres of land and to each child 25 acres; in the mean time they were to work for him. Dr. Turnbull settled them upon his lands, 60 miles south of St. Augustine, and worked them in raising provisions and indigo. They cleared, ditched and cultivated more than 3,000 acres of land—but the Doctor did not keep his contract with them; he reduced them to slavery, placed task-masters over them; women and children were scourged and negroes employed to use the lash. Sometimes they were cruelly whipped, slept tied to trees all night, for the musquitoes to feed upon. For nine long years they endured this intolerable slavery. In 1776, the year of AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE, they escaped to St. Augustine, consulted with the Attorney-General, and the claim of Turnbull was judicially repudiated. Their original number was 1,500, but had become reduced to 600; and these were assigned lots north of the City of St. Augustine, where they built houses, made gardens and enlarged their borders, and many of their descendants are now among the most attractive and most respectable portion of the population of the State.

Between 1812 and 1815, the United States and England were at war—the Spanish Government at Pensacola permitted the English fleets to enter the ports of West Florida, to operate against the United States. After the peace, British traders and agents excited the Indians in Georgia and Florida to make war upon the white settlements. The United States Government sent General JACKSON, in 1815, with an army to chastise and restrain them, and he destroyed the Indian towns, and took possession of the Spanish Fort at St. Marks. On the Suwanee River he captured two Englishmen, Arbuthnot and Ambrister, who were charged and found guilty by a Court Martial, of aiding and inciting the Indians in their murderous depredations on the whites. Gen. Jackson confirmed the sentence and hanged them at St Marks.*

Gen. Jackson laid down this principle, and acted upon it—"It is an established principle of the laws of nations, "that any individual of a nation, making war against the "citizens of any other nation, they being at peace, forfeits "his allegiance and becomes an outlaw and a pirate." This was not regarded by many as "good law," and it was said could not be found in Grotius, Vattel or any other standard writer on international law—but Gen. Jackson was sustained, and his conduct vindicated by John Quincy Adams. This principle has since been acted upon by the Captain General of Cuba, in condemning to death the fifty men under Crittenden, in the Lopez expedition.

Spain occupied Florida 235 years, and kept up military ports at St. Augustine and Pensacola nearly all that time; but the country remained unsettled and produced no revenue. The annual cost to Spain is said to have been $300,000, and the annual cost to England, during her 21 year's possession, about one million of dollars.

In February, 1821, Spain sold to the United States East and West Florida, for $5,000,000, to be paid to the citizens of the United States for losses sustained by reason of Spanish injustice. On the third of March, 1821, Congress passed a law authorizing the President to take possession, and all military, civil and judicial powers were vested in such person as he should direct, until the end of the next session of Congress. Under this law, President Monroe appointed ANDREW JACKSON, Governor, and other persons Judges, &c., of Florida—and by Gen. Jackson's commission, he had conferred upon him, "all "the powers and authorities heretofore exercised by the "Governor and Captain General, and Intendant of Cuba "and by the Governors of East and West Florida." Here were indefinite and limitless powers. Gen. Jackson could officially do any thing the Captain General of Cuba had done or could do—and Jackson was not the man to doubt the right to exercise any powers conferred, and as he construed them.

He took possession of East Florida on the 10th of July, 1821, and of West Florida the 17th of the same month. On the 17th he issued a proclamation, and making his head-quarters at Pensacola on the 18th he published an ordinance establishing a City Council to preserve order and levy taxes. On the 19th he proclaimed quarantine regulations. On the 20th he divided the Territory into two counties, establishing courts of justice, &c. On the 21st he illustrated his powers of Captain-Generalship by sending a body of soldiers and arresting the ex-Spanish Governor, taking him out of bed at night, because the ex-Governor would not give up certain papers; and when he protested at the indignity offered his person, Jackson sent him to prison. The United States Judge then issued a *habeas corpus*, to bring the ex-Governor before him, whereupon Gen. Jackson ordered the Judge before him, and would have sent him to prison, had he not suspended his judicial functions. Next, Governor Jackson sent and searched the Spanish Governor's house, obtained the papers, and released his prisoner. A few days after, the ex-Governor and his Spanish friends published some strictures upon Gen. Jackson's conduct, whereupon he immediately *banished* them from the country, ordering them to *quit* in four days, under penalty of imprisonment.

Such was the beginning of Gen. Jackson's exercise of the powers of a Captain-General of Florida, and which were a significant premonition of the manner he could and did exercise the powers of Chief Executive Magistrate of the Republic. The government of Gen. Jackson in Florida was terminated by act of Congress, March 30, 1822, providing for a regular Territorial Government. Florida was admitted into the Union, as a State, in 1845.

Ever since the search of Juan Ponce for the "Fountain of Youth" within her borders, Florida has been a land of hopes and fancies—fancy has painted her in bright and brilliant colors—she has been represented as containing twenty millions of acres of the best lands in the world—where the fruits of St. Domingo grew wild—where the olive tree flourished as well as in France, and having a million of acres of coffee lands, she could supply the world with sugar, coffee, &c.

And when the subject of her acquisition was before Congress, JOHN RANDOLPH said, "Florida, Mr. Speaker, "Florida, Sir, is a land of ponds and swamps, and quag "mires, of crocodiles and alligators, and snakes and "frogs, and fevers—no man will ever emigrate to it—no, "Sir, not from Purgatory itself."

The truth lies between the extremes. Florida is a diversified country, having good lands and poor lands swamps and everglades, clear lakes, big springs and beautiful bays filled with delicious fish. It has a climate unsurpassed for its genial uniformity, and for its health-restoring and life-preserving qualities: a large portion of it is an evergreen country, where flowers are in perpetual bloom and the tropical fruits ripen unceasingly, and although within its limits has never been found the "Fountain of Youth," it is here more than anywhere else on Earth's surface, where are cured and alleviated most of the bodily ills which "flesh is heir to."

The historical incidents and events enumerated herein, were gleaned from a very able and interesting Lecture upon the *History of Florida*, delivered at Key West the last winter by Hon. WM. MARVIN, United States Judge for the Southern District of Florida.

* In fact, the Court Martial sentenced one of them to death, the other to a milder punishment; but Gen Jackson hung them both. Mr. J. Q. Adams, as Secretary of State, felt himself constrained to justify Gen. Jackson's arbitrary proceedings in Florida against the complaints of Spain and Great Britain; but we presume he never heartily approved them.

LOCO-FOCO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND PUBLIC DOCUMENTS.—We saw on the side-walk at the post office on Sunday morning two immense piles of bundles of public documents. One pile consisted of nine bundles franked by Senator Jones, of Iowa, to himself, and the other of sixteen bundles franked by Mr. Jones, Loco-Foco member of the House of Representatives from Tenessee, to himself. Each package was estimated to weigh about a hundred and twenty pounds, and so here were three thousand pounds or a tun and a half of documents for those two Loco-Foco Joneses. It is a shameful abuse of the franking privilege, and we heartily desire to see this privilege, so often prostituted, utterly repealed. Members of Congress should be allowed no privilege by which they can monopolize the mails and thus deprive the people of their regular and just mail facilities. [Louisville Journal, 24th.